



**FOSTER**  
WEB MARKETING

# Killer Website Marketing System for Attorneys

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You can always read, download and sign up for our newsletter at [www.FWMnewsletter.com](http://www.FWMnewsletter.com)

“I have nothing but the highest respect for Tom, his team, and the product and service his company delivers. It is rare these days to have partners and vendors on which I can rely and count on to get the job done as they did.”



**Jeff Rasansky**

[www.jrlawfirm.com](http://www.jrlawfirm.com)

Check out [www.FosterWebSuccess.com](http://www.FosterWebSuccess.com) to hear what our lawyers have to say about us!

## How Does Google+ Impact Search?

Since it launched in the summer of last year, social networking website Google+ has remained a mystery to many law firms and businesses. Is it just like Facebook? Do I need to join? Can it be used as a marketing tool? What's with the +1 button? Although almost 100 million people and businesses have set up profiles and pages in just months, the power and usefulness of the website is still an unknown.

Here's the most important thing you need to know about Google+: It is the only social networking website that is connected to Google Search, the most popular search engine on the net. Learning about how Google+ can impact Google searches is key to improving where your firm ranks in search engine results as well as your overall online marketing plan.



### What is the +1 Button?

Ask yourself, “Am I putting enough effort into adding new, fresh content to my website?” Don't let your busy schedule prevent you from carrying out this important aspect of your marketing campaign. **In order to keep business flowing, you must constantly be trying to think ahead about the cases that your content will help bring in.** The easiest way to do this? Use DSS to compare the content strategy you are using now with

FWM recommendations and other attorneys in the group. See where you rank, and make it a goal to increase your position—even if it means hiring someone to help you.

You've probably seen it popping up on all of your favorite websites: the +1 button. It's usually next to a Facebook “like” button and a Twitter button – it also appears next to all Google search results and Google ads. According to Google, the +1 button is a quick way for users to share information, put their stamp of approval on a page, and get conversations going. Users can either show their +1's or hide them... but each time they click the button, they are letting Google know about quality web content.

Users can add comments each time they add a +1, share their finds with certain circles, and browse the +1's that their friends have added. Google+ users can also see a list of other readers who have also +1'd a page.

### Why are +1's important to search?

Each time you click the +1 button, two things happen: You are affecting the searches of your friends (anyone in your Google+ circles), and you sending a message to Google Search about the general relevance of the page you tagged. When someone you are connected with on Google+ searches for a related term, that person will see that you've recommended the page.

As Google+ evolves and matures, Google engineers and experts will be researching just how effective the +1 feature is at finding great content and popular pages. The stronger connection they find, the more likely they are to give +1's an even greater influence over search results.

### Get +1 buttons on your attorney website pages!

Getting a Google+ page for your lawyer website is a great step, but getting +1 buttons for your website is a quick way to allow your readers to share your material while also improving your Google search result rankings. Order our Google+ book to learn more at [www.GooglePlusForLawyers.com](http://www.GooglePlusForLawyers.com)



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## WHAT'S NEW IN DSS?

*Here is what our DSS team has been up to lately:*

• **Make the most of every lead by setting up drip-campaigns for your offers in right in DSS!** We've overhauled the Offers section of DSS where you add books, reports and other offers so that you can set up email follow-up messages. This allows you to keep in touch with people who have requested one of your offers! This is a KEY component of your marketing campaign, so make sure you're using this great new feature.

• **All types of content on your site now have an RSS feed, not just news and blog.** This gives your followers a way to keep up with all the content on your site!

• **Google Analytics data – right in DSS!** We've integrated with Google Analytics so you can see your page views, number of visitors, bounce rate and more. Now it is easier than ever to see how popular a page on your site is, and to fix it if it has a high bounce rate.

• **Better quality videos for all DSS users:** we've increased the bitrate for our video encoding, so your videos should now look crisper and more clear than ever before... at no additional cost to you!

• **Integration with more services, to give you more options.** We've integrated with Constant Contact and Apex Chat, to give you more options for your contact management and chat services.

*Stay up to date on the latest and greatest from DSS by following us on*



[www.Facebook.com/DynamicSelfService](http://www.Facebook.com/DynamicSelfService)



[www.Twitter.com/FWM\\_DSS](http://www.Twitter.com/FWM_DSS)

# USING TECHNOLOGY TO GET PAID PART 2

*Last month, we showed how technology gives attorneys the power to control cash flow through the use of credit cards and online payments.*



*Get more info at [www.LawPay.com/foster](http://www.LawPay.com/foster)*

## THE LAW FIRM MERCHANT

In the world of merchant accounts, law firms are unique business entities. Unlike a restaurant or retail store, law firms have special considerations when dealing with credit cards and client funds.

Whether you are considering accepting credit cards or already offer an electronic payment option, using state-of-the-art

technology will ensure you are paid quickly and securely. Some other tips to ensure a successful transition to the modern ways of getting paid as a Law Firm Merchant:

**1 Protect your trust and IOLTA accounts.** Do not allow your merchant provider access to your trust account. Most merchant agreements will require you to give access to this account in the event of a chargeback or fraud. There are merchant services specific to law firms that correctly protect and safeguard your trust accounts.

**2 Avoid Storing Credit Card Information.** If you bill clients on a monthly basis, you will potentially need the ability to re-charge their credit cards. Accepting credit cards through a secure web-based solution will allow you to avoid keeping sensitive credit card information within the walls of your office. Modern law firms are quickly moving away from the traditional credit card machines which sometimes require paper storage of client credit card numbers. This also limits the liability and risk to your firm of credit card information falling into the wrong hands.

**3 Communicate to your Clients.** Let clients know what your payment expectations are on the front end by including due dates, late fees and payment options as part of your fee agreement. It is much easier to establish these guidelines while your client is new and eager to get started.

More importantly, continue to communicate to your clients what payment options you provide by including credit card logos or adding 'Major Credit Cards Accepted' to your invoices and website. Clients will commonly look for an attorney that provides credit card options. Even popular legal websites such as Martindale-Hubbell have specific search criteria to find attorneys that accept credit cards.

**4 Use the Technology You Have.** Once you make the decision to accept credit cards, be sure to use the payment option that best suit your needs. Depending on your area of practice, and more importantly where you interact with your client there are different choices to accept payment. For example, there are many options to accept credit cards with smart phones, including iPads and laptops.

**5 Let Your Clients do the Work.** By taking time to establish payment options on your website, clients can run their own credit cards. Not only does this provide a convenience to clients, but frees up the time you would normally spend processing credit card payments. This also allows you to avoid ever seeing credit card numbers, eliminating any responsibility to accept, store, shred or protect credit card numbers.



## Staff Spotlight: Karen Hoff

*If you have a problem, Karen Hoff has a solution.* And if she doesn't have one, she'll go find someone who does. As the new Customer Service Manager and Office Manager at Foster, she is determined to knock the socks off of anyone who calls with an issue ~~—and to keep our headquarters fully organized and stocked with snacks at the same time.~~

Karen is used to wearing many hats—she started out as a hairdresser before landing a job in customer service, working as a project manager, and gaining experience in communications (and no, you don't even have to ask, she also has experience in social media and social networking!). Over the years, she has collected all the broad experience and skills she needs to keep clients happy and to keep everything in the office running smoothly from day to day.

When she's not making certain everyone at work is happy and organized, Karen likes to spend time with her husband, her stepchildren, and her two cats. A long-time resident of Virginia, she enjoys camping and hiking in the woods on weekends just as much as she enjoys exploring cities, traveling, and visiting local wineries. At home, she loves to throw parties for friends and family with lots of great food.

*After she settles in, Karen hopes to raise the level of customer service at Foster to dizzying heights.* What does she think is the backbone of stellar customer service? "Listening is the most important thing I can do. I listen, I make sure I understand, and I respond. Our clients don't want to hear a scripted response. They want me to get what they are saying and find an answer. They want more than a voice on the other end of the phone."

*What does she like about Foster so far?* "Everyone has been very welcoming and fun to work with already. I love the environment. I love being part of the team."

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## Using Technology to Get Paid

**6 PCI Compliance.** When you accept credit cards in your office, you also accept the responsibility of protecting cardholder data. Be sure your merchant solution is PCI Compliant. PCI-DSS is the Payment Card Industry's security guidelines for merchants. More information can be found on the Security Council website, [www.pcisecuritystandards.org](http://www.pcisecuritystandards.org) or other PCI specialists like [www.PCICentral.com](http://www.PCICentral.com).

### WHAT CHECKBOOK?

If you thought the internet was a fad, swore you would never carry a cell phone (now you do, but still trying to figure out how to send a text message), then you are likely thinking that you will never accept credit card payments from your clients. Like the Internet, credit cards and other forms of electronic payments have become an integral part of our nation's commerce and the way many people prefer to pay. In 2009, credit cards officially surpassed paper check transactions in the U.S. Last

year, over \$60 Billion was processed through debit and credit cards. Perhaps it is time to rethink the way your firm handles billing and collections.

Hall, Arbery & Gilligan, LLP a Mississippi law firm recently embraced payment technology and immediately saw a decrease in the number of days their invoices were outstanding. The firm administrator decided to take it one step further and add a payment option to their website [www.hagllp.com](http://www.hagllp.com). Jeannie Johnston, Hall, Arbery & Gilligan's Firm Manager and Paralegal, says by adding a Secure Payment Link to their website, they've seen an increase in payments by individuals who would typically make multiple payments via check. Johnston indicates one of the biggest benefits to using technology to get paid is the convenience and the ability to collect a full balance from clients. When asked if she would recommend using technology as a form of payment, Johnston says "I would

absolutely recommend attorneys using technology to get paid. I believe this is the road attorneys are going down. Firms that haven't previously considered using technology as a payment option should reconsider their decision."

### YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SUPERMAN TO BE A SUPER LAWYER

It is not necessary to be a website developer or have a degree in computer science to embrace credit card payments, just a smart attorney that knows how to get paid. By using technology as a payment tool, you give clients flexible payment options while allowing yourself to get paid quickly and securely. So, with technology moving at a rate that is "faster than a speeding bullet", throw on your Super-Lawyer cape and take back control of your receivables and ultimately your practice. 🌐



# The Benefits of Having a Mobile Website

*Everyone is talking about mobile websites these days—but is it*

*a passing trend or a smart long-term marketing move?*

Is having a mobile-optimized website worth the trouble, and what are the advantages of taking the time to cater to smartphone users?

Let's take a closer look at the big benefits of going mobile:

• **Mobile web use is absolutely skyrocketing.**

For the first time ever, smartphone sales have eclipsed

computer and laptop sales. This, paired with the ever-increasing availability of WiFi service, means that more people than ever are surfing the web while on the go.

• **A mobile site can boost your SEO performance.**

Google now has specific bots that search mobile websites for great content and collect ranking information. If someone plugs keywords into Google Search from their phone, phone-friendly results will top the list.

• **Your competitors will be doing it.**

If a potential client is searching

for an attorney on a mobile device, he or she will gravitate to the mobile-friendly site every time. Nobody likes navigating a non-mobile site on a phone. Don't give away such an easy advantage!

• **Your users deserve the best experience possible.**

The best way to connect with website visitors is to make reading your website, learning about a case, and contacting you as easy as possible. Offering a mobile website means offering your readers yet another high-quality way of educating themselves and reaching out to your attorneys.

In 2011, almost 100 million people used their smartphones to shop, compare prices, or find businesses locally. This number is only expected to rise. At the same time, millions of Americans are watching videos, surfing the web, and using mobile apps on their smartphones every day. Remember when you weren't sure whether or not your law firm needed a website to stay relevant? We think the new mobile phenomenon is just as big. Trust us: Get a mobile website now so you can begin getting new clients and contacts. And so you can say, "I told you so" later. 🌐

## FAQ



Tom Foster, pictured here with his daughter Maddie.

Photo by Jim Folliard of the Fairfax Video Studio.

## Q: Do I need a Google+ account to create and manage a business page?

**A:** Yes! We know that adding another social networking website to the list of accounts you manage doesn't sound like something you want on your plate, but we believe that Google+ has the potential to be great for your business—especially if you begin now. *What's so exciting about having a Google+ business page? It's integrated in several ways with Google Search—by far the popular and powerful search engine around.*

Just like Facebook, Google+ requires you to have a personal account before setting up a business page. After you have a personal account (which is free), simply go to [plus.google.com/create/page](https://plus.google.com/create/page). Select "local business" and begin creating your profile by adding contact information, sharing pictures, and creating circles. Google+ circles, in which you group your friends under specific labels (like "employee," "client," or "local business") helps ensure that every message you write goes to the people that matter most.

Google+ is relatively new, which means that it is changing, growing, and improving all of the time. Google has stated that they will add a number of features to their business pages in the coming year—be sure to get started and get familiar with the website before your competition does!

## Q: What is Pinterest, and can I use it as a marketing tool?

*You may have heard friends and family members talking about Pinterest—the hottest new social networking website.* The site, which allows users to "pin" photos they like on their virtual boards, encourages people to share ideas, inspirations, and images with friends and others on the network. The website is especially popular with women, who share everything from vacation ideas to design photos to recipes to motivational quotes. Users can browse friends' pages and re-pin images that they connect with and wish to share.

While Pinterest does not yet have pages specifically for businesses, the new social website is already being seen as an opportunity for marketing. While it differs from more traditional social networking sites like Facebook, the unique features of Pinterest offer unique marketing opportunities. Most notably, the site encourages marketing through images and video – giving attorneys and other business a chance to reach new clients primarily in a visual way as opposed to a textual way. Pinterest is also a great way to connect your social media efforts—Tweet about what you've pinned, pin an Instagram you took of your office, or add a Pinterest friend to one of your Google+ circles.



Not many businesses have harnessed Pinterest as a marketing tool yet—beat the competition and be the first in your area! 🌐